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NO WOOL FOR THE CLOTHES MOTH

Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A. Broadcast in the Department of Agriculture portion of the National Farm and Home Four Tuesday, October 13, 1942, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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ANNOUNCER:

And here in New York we have with us Ruth Van Deman, of the United States Department of Agriculture. Today Miss Van Deman has some practical tips, for the wartime homemaker, on how to protect summer woolens from the clothes moth. In these days, wool is so precious -- I suppose even the "black sheep" of the flock would be accepted. For their wool.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Don't you believe that old story about the black sheep. They're just as well behaved as the white sheep.

ANNOUNCER:

That's not the way I heard the story.

VAN DEMAN:

Black sheep are very important sometimes, as counters. If you had charge of 2,000 sheep, all scattered over the hillside, and they were all white -- how could you count them?

ANNOUNCER:

Well, on a snowy day -- it would be pretty hard.

VAN DEMAN:

But if you had forty black sheep, and they were all present and accounted for -- you'd know right away that most of the whole flock was safe. But look here. This is no time to be counting sheep!

ANNOUNCER:

You think counting summer blankets would be more to the point?

VAN DEMAN:

I do indeed. Counting summer blankets, and getting them ready for storage. Summer flannels, too. Suits and dresses and sweaters. Bathing suits, felt hats. Summer furs.

ANNOUNCER:

Please include men's worsted suits.

VAN DEMAN:

By all means. They must all be stored where the moths can't reach them -- on warm days in the winter. In wartime, there's no wool for the

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clothes moth. We civilians must take care of all the wool we have, so there'll be plenty of warm uniforms and overcoats and blankets for Johnny Doughboy.

So -- we must store our summer woollens where they'll be protected from the clothes moth itself, and from the newly hatched larvae. Which, by the way, can squeeze through a crack only four-thousandths of an inch wide.

ANNOUNCER:

No wonder you find the pesky things in clothes you thought were safely packed away. Clothes that were dry-cleaned, too. Isn't dry-cleaning supposed to kill the clothes moth?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, dry cleaning does kill moths. So does washing in a strong suds made with neutral soap. And so do sunning and airing, along with good brisk brushing. And when you brush you have to be sure to get in around the seams and pockets, to dislodge any moth eggs.

Once you get clothing free of moths, store it -- right away. In paper bags, in boxes, trunks, chests, or a tight closet. If you store clothing in paper bags and packages, put them where they won't get torn. Moths won't eat paper, but they are smart enough to crawl in through holes. If you store your clothes in boxes or trunks, be sure there's a tight-fitting lid. If you use a special closet, put crack filler in any cracks you find in the plaster or around the baseboards.

ANNOUNCER:

How about a gasket on the closet door -- so you can shut it tight.

VAN DEMAN:

That's a very practical suggestion. But in spite of all precautions, there's a chance you may not have got rid of all moth eggs and larvae. So play safe, use flake naphthalene, paradichlorobenzene, or mothballs which contain these chemicals. For a small chest or trunk, you'll need about one pound. And keep that lid on tight!

ANNOUNCER:

Don't cedar chests protect wool from moths?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, cedar chests made of at least 70 percent solid red cedar -- if the chest is tight -- will protect wool from moths. However, when it comes to the clothes moth I'm a doubting Thomas. No matter how tight the cedar chest -- or the box, or trunk -- or storage closet -- I personally would put in some naphthalene flakes or paradichlorobenzene, or mothballs. Just for luck.

ANNOUNCER:

Let's hope the luck is on the side of your summer woollens.

VAN DEMAN:

It will be -- if you follow the rules. And by the way, if you want the rules where you can refer to them at a moment's notice, send to the United States Department of Agriculture, in Washington, D. C., for Leaflet 145, entitled -- simply -- "Clothes Moths."

ANNOUNCER:

Farm and Home friends, these suggestions on keeping moths out of summer woollens were given by Ruth Van Deman of the Department of Agriculture. Now, to hear from Wallace Kadderly, we take you to Washington.